Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program
Participant Guide

The Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program was established to encourage professional development and educational growth within the court clerk profession. It is sponsored by the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA), the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC), and Texas State University. Program participants achieve certification upon successful completion of each of the three levels: Level I (CCCI), Level II (CCCII), and Level III Municipal Court Clerk (CMCC). Each level requires specific education hours, exams, and an application. Level III certification has additional requirements, including books, journals, and specific seminars.

For more detailed information about the program, visit https://www.tmcec.com/clerk-certification/. Please direct any certification-related questions to certification@tmcec.com.

I. General Overview of Certification Requirements by Level

Note: All education hours must be completed within three years of the application date to count toward the required hours below. Participants who completed the New Clerks Seminar more than three years before the application date do not have to attend that seminar again, but the hours from that past seminar do not count toward certification.

A. Level I.

- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other approved alternative education (must include the 32-hour TMCEC New Clerks Seminar unless attended more than three years before application date)
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level I exam
- Complete and submit an application to TMCEC

B. Level II

- Level I Certification
- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other approved alternative education (participants may reuse unexpired hours)
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level II exam
- Complete and submit an application to TMCEC

C. Level III[1]

- Level II Certification
- Complete required reading
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level III exam
- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other approved alternative education, including specific events (i.e., Level III Assessment Clinic and Court Administrators Seminar)
- Complete court observations
- Complete and submit a journal with a passing grade of 70
- Complete and submit an application to TMCEC

[1] Please see the Level III Course of Study & Requirements document for specific details.

II. Initial Education Hours for Certification

- TMCEC and TCCA offer in-person and virtual events annually for court personnel, which count for clerk certification credit based on hours of attendance. See the TMCEC online academic schedule and TCCA Education and Testing Events page for a list of events. TMCEC also maintains a list of approved alternative education providers for the program. See the TMCEC General Enrollment Information page for more information about registration, attendance, and credit hours.
- For all levels of certification, up to eight (8) of the total hours may be earned by attending approved virtual on-demand (recorded) courses (e.g., TMCEC archived webinars).
- Please note that credit hours expire after three years.

III. Eligibility

- Only clerks employed by a municipal court in Texas are eligible to attend a TMCEC event.
- For Levels I and II, participants who are not employed by a municipal court may earn credit hours toward certification through TCCA or another approved alternative providers. Both TCCA members and non-members are eligible to attend TCCA events (there is a registration fee for non-members).
- To achieve Level III certification, participants must be employed by a municipal or justice court. However, to maintain Level III certification, such employment is not required.
- Each level of certification is successive. To become certified at Level II, participants must be currently certified at Level I. To become certified at Level III, participants must be currently certified at Level II.

IV. Exams

To register for an exam, go to the TCCA Testing Events webpage.

A. Exam Requirements

- Certification at each level requires successful completion of a three-part exam.
- Participants may take the Level I, Level II, and Level III exams in parts. Participants may choose to test one or more parts at a time. If the participant is unsuccessful on a part, only the unsuccessful part must be retaken. The time allowed to complete the exam is four hours regardless of the number of parts taken (even if only taking one part).
- A participant may take an exam as many times as needed to pass successfully.
- Participants must achieve the prior level of certification to register and test at the next level.

B. Exam Fees

- The Level I exam is $25 per part ($75 for the entire exam).
- The Level II exam is $25 per part ($75 for the entire exam).
- The Level III exam is $25 per part ($75 for the entire exam).
- All fees must be paid prior to sitting for the exam.
- There are no refunds or transfers of exam fees.
- Registration for a subsequent exam will not be accepted when there are fees outstanding from another exam.

C. Exam Expiration

- For Level I and Level II, exam results are valid for three years from the exam date.
- For Level III, exam results are valid for five years from the exam date.
- Exams are subject to destruction after five years.

D. Alternative Testing Accommodations

For more information and to request alternative testing accommodations, go to the TCCA Testing Events webpage.

E. Exam Results

TMCEC posts exam results in the participant's Personal Profile under the Clerk Certification tab.

V. Applications

For each level, participants must complete and submit an application with required proof of passing the exam and completion of applicable credit hours. For more instructions, go to TMCEC's Becoming Certified webpage.

VI. Certificates

Upon achievement of certification at Level I or Level II, participants will receive a paper certificate. For Level III certificates, participants will receive a mounted certificate, unless the participant requests a paper copy without a mount. Replacements are available through the TCCA website at a cost.

VII. Study Materials and Resources

TMCEC and TCCA offer many materials and events to assist participants with certification, including the following:

- Clerk Certification Webpage
- Clerk Study Guides for Level I and Level II
- Prep Sessions
- Practice Exams
- Level III Book Club
- Level III Study Questions
- Mentors
- Flashcards
- Questions? Email certification@tmcec.com.

VIII. Maintaining Certification

A. Continuing Education Hours

- To maintain certification, Level I and Level II certified clerks must obtain 12 hours of approved continuing education each academic year (September 1 – August 31).
- Level III certified clerks must obtain 20 hours of approved continuing education.
- Of the required continuing education hours for all levels, up to eight (8) may be obtained through approved virtual on-demand (recorded) courses (e.g., TMCEC archived webinars).
- All continuing education hours must be completed by August 31st of each academic year.

- Credit for Attending Prep Sessions
    - Level I prep sessions count for five (5) hours of continuing education.
    - Level II prep sessions count for up to six (6) hours of continuing education. Each session consists of three two-hour increments that cover each certification test part (A, B, and C). Participants will receive two hours of credit for each increment they attend.
    - Participants may not earn credit for attending a prep session for an exam the participant has already passed (unless the exam has expired).
    - Participants may earn credit for attending a prep session a second time if unsuccessful on the examination.

B. Renewal Applications and Automatic Certification Renewals

- Each academic year (September 1 – August 31), certified clerks must submit proof of their continuing education to TMCEC with a renewal application, unless they qualify for automatic certification renewal. Clerks are not required to file a renewal application within the same academic year that they become certified.
- Renewal applications are due by August 31st of each academic year.
- Automatic Certification Renewals
    - Level I and II certified clerks who attend a TMCEC event that is at least 12 hours (e.g., Regional Clerks Seminars, Court Administrators Seminar, Court Security Conference, etc.) will automatically be renewed if they complete and submit a record of attendance on the final day of the event. Clerks who submit a record of attendance after the event must submit a renewal application.
    - Clerks certified at all levels who attend the TCCA Annual Conference and are on the final list of approved certificates will automatically be renewed.
- Certified clerks can verify their renewal status in the TMCEC Registration Site under the Clerk Certification tab.

C. Non-compliance: Probation and Loss of Certification

1. Probation

- If a certified clerk does not meet continuing education requirements and/or fails to submit a renewal application with required documentation to TMCEC in an academic year, the clerk will be placed on probationary status for the subsequent academic year. TMCEC will notify the clerk of this status in writing.
- While on probation, a clerk must complete both:
    - The standard annual continuing education requirement for their certification level, and
    - Any deficient hours from the previous academic year.
- The current standard continuing education requirements are:
    - Level I and Level II: 12 hours (no more than 8 hours of approved virtual on-demand courses)
    - Level III: 20 hours (no more than 8 hours of approved virtual on-demand courses)

Example: A Level II clerk who completed only 6 of the required 12 hours last year must complete 6 make-up hours plus the full 12 hours for the current year, for a total of 18 hours during the probationary academic year.

- All required hours must be completed within the probationary academic year to maintain active certification. Level I and Level II certified clerks who become inactive permanently lose their certification.

2. Inactive Status

- If a certified clerk does not meet continuing education requirements and/or submit a renewal application with required documentation to TMCEC for two consecutive academic years, the clerk becomes "inactive."
- Level I and Level II certified clerks who become inactive permanently lose their certification.
- Clerks who lose their certification are eligible to re-take the exam and re-apply for certification but must begin at Level I even if they were certified at Level II.
- Level III certified clerks who become inactive may reinstate their certification.

3. Reinstating Level III Certification

- Any clerk who has achieved Level III certification, but has become inactive, may reinstate their certification by completing 40 hours of education and submitting a renewal application with certificates of attendance to TMCEC.
- Six of those hours must come from TMCEC's Legislative Update.
- All 40 hours of education must be from within the preceding three years from the date of application.
- Up to eight (8) of the 40 hours may be obtained through TMCEC's archived (on-demand or pre-recorded) webinars.

4. Appeal

Certified clerks who have completed their continuing education requirements for the previous year but fail to timely file their renewal application by the deadline may appeal to the Municipal Courts Education Committee.

VIII. Non-court Employees

- Certified clerks must notify TMCEC if they are no longer employed by a municipal court but intend to maintain certification. Send notification to certification@tmcec.com.
- To maintain certification, clerks no longer employed by a court must complete the applicable annual continuing education and application requirements. However, they are not eligible to complete education through TMCEC (including in-person seminars, virtual seminars, and webinars) and must complete their education through TCCA or another alternative provider.